Now, corruption on the road, especially on the traffic side, is something which is worrying all of us. We do see with our own eyes that people are being checked and harassed on fictitious grounds. So, this Bill would bring about certain centralisation of the doucumenttion and other things and I hope we would be able to stop part of the corruption and one day, I hope, we will get rid of this thing, and we can do it.

Of course, checking of overloading again is with the State Governments. We are creating training schools.

Moolchand Meenaji has also given the figures. I would like to inform Meenaji that in India we have 13.1 accidents per thousand vehicles. I am just making a comparison with Japan Japan has 12.1 accidents per thousand and this does not make us very happy but I am saying it is a worldwide phenomenon, but in our country it is more because of so many things which the hon. Members have pointed out. Wrong licences have been given. People are not medically fit to be given licences. They are getting licences on fake certificates from other States. It is for the States to see that this malpractice does not take place.

About speed-brakers, I would like to inform the hon. Members that neither are the State Governments nor is the Central Government encouraging or spending money for putting up speed-breakers. The villages and the municipalities themselves are doing it. We have tried our level best and in some places we have physically removed them but overnight they come up. It is for the knowledge of the public, for the safety of the public. This is an awareness which must be created among the public by the State Governments and whatever elese can be done.

I am very happy that most of the Members have supported this Bill. I think, that is all. I have answered all the questions. Thank you.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (MISS SAROJ KHAPARDE): I hope, all the hon. Members are satisfied with the reply given by the Minister. I shall now put the motion moved by the Minister to vote. Now, the question is:

"That the Bill further to amend the Motor Vehicles Act, 1988, be taken into consideration."

The motion was adopted.

We shall now take up clause-by-clause consideration of the Bill.

Clause 2 to 64 were added to the Bill.

Clause 1, the Enacting Formula and the Title were added to the Bill.

SHRI JAGDISH TYTLER: Madam, I beg to move:

"That the Bill be passed."

The question was put and the motion was adopted.

THE AIRPORTS AUTHORITY OF INDIA BILL (1994)

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (MISS SAROJ KHAPARDE): Now I would like to have up the Airports Authority of India Bill, 1994.

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION AND TOURISM (SHRI GHULAM NABI AZAD): Madam, I beg to move:

"That the Bill to provide for the constitution of the Airports Authority of India and for the transfer and vesting of the undertakings of the International Airports Authority of India and the National Airports Authority to and in the Airports Authority of India so

constituted for the better administeration and cohesive management of airports and civil enclaves whereat air transport services are operated of are intended to be operated and of all aeronautical communication stations and for matters connected therewith or incidental thereto as passed by Lok Sabha, be taken into consideration.

Madam, the major problem at airports is multiplicity of organisations. Leaving aside agencies like Customs and immigration, which necessarily have to remain at the international airports, within Civil Aviation itself two separate authorities, namely the National Airports Authority and the International Airports Authority of India, function in watertight compartments under two separate Acts of Parliament, thereby aggravating avoidable problems of coordination.

Inaternational airports are managed by the International Airports Authority of India but the vital function of air traffic control and aeronautical communications is managed by the National Airports Authority. This dual control creates extreme problems of divided responsibility which have a very adverse impact on the quality of services provided at the airports.

It is proposed to merge the National Airports Authority and the International Airports Authority of India for better coordination in the operational matters, enhancement of air safety, better maintenance of the infrastructure and also better mobilisation and utilisation of resources for integrated development of airports.

The merger would provide for closer integration, better administration and cohesive management of airports, aeronautical communication and air transport management services. The expertise developed in various fields in the two organisations can be pooled for improved efficiency.

With the proposed unification, it will be possible to avoid overlapping, to pool the human resource of both the organisations for better deployment and to secure more efficient utilisation of manpower.

The investments planned by the National Airports Authority and the International Airports Authority of India in the Eighth Plan period put together, is of the order of Rs. 1,566 crores. The proposed out lay of the Ninth Plan is going to be much higher. Only a unified authority, with a determined and a well-coordinated approach could measure up to the task of mobilising the requisite resources by a suitable blend of revenueraising and borrowing.

The human problems associated with the personnel have been well appreciated. With a flexible approach and a better understanding, there problems could be solved with the involvement of the unions and proper coordination, so that the transition is smooth.

Madam, I would now like to seek the support of the hon. Members to pass the Bill to bring the international and the domestic airports under a single authority.

The question was proposed.

SHRI JOHN F. FERNANDES (Goa): Madam, thank you for calling me first for the second time.

I rise to support the Airports Authority of India Bill, 1994. Madam, the purpose of this Bill as mentioned by the hon. Minister, is to merge the existing Authorities. Prior to 1972, we did not have these authorities. The function of these Authorities was carried on by the Director-General of Civil Aviation. At that time, the Government of India thought that our airports should be modernised specially the international airports on a par with the

airports of foreign countries, developed countries. The International Airports Authodity of India came into being in 1972, Since then we have been seeing the development at the four international airports in India, i.e. Delhi, Bombay, Calcutta and Madras. We compliment this Authority because not only they have developed the airports in India, but they have also taken up jobs abroad, overseas and they have also built airports in India and abroad. The National Airports Authority managed other airports which were not international airports. In India we have 88 airports. Out of these 88 airports, 28 are under the Defence Forces. Most of the smaller airports are not functioning As a result, they don't have any revenue. The National Airports Authority of India went bankrupt in many cases. They borrowed money from the International Airports Authority of India and that created friction between these two Authorities. Therefore, I feel that it is a very wise step which has been taken by the Government to scrap these two Authorities and to have a new Authority, i.e. the Airport Authority of India. I feel that this Bill will be widely welcomed not only by the Members of Parliament but also by the other sectors like trading sector. Then, Madam, we don't have any monopoly on airports. Earlier we had only one carrier, i.e., the Indian Airlines. At that time, it was okay for two Authorities to manage one airline. But with the liberalised policy, with the "Open-Sky" policy, we have seen that 15 Air Taxi Operators have come into operation. I think having two Authorities would certainly create confusion. There would not be any central authority to control and command. The hon. Minister has rightly come forward with this Bill to see that these Authorities are merged and a new authority is formed so that the duplicity of work is done away with. Madam, we have seen often that whenever there was any emergency or any accident, there was a total chaos at the airports because they did not know from whom to take orders. I would like to give an example about the accident to Boeing-737 at the Ahmedabad Airport. This accident occurred just outside the Airport. Some more lives could have been saved had there been no red-tapism. When the Fire-Brigade was called, they could not cross a part of the Airport which was under the control of the National Airport Authority. As a result many people had to lose their lives. I feel it is a right step on the part of the Government to form one Authority in the country, Madam, 28 airports are under the control of the Defence. In these airports we have only Civil Enclaves, For example the Goa Airport, It is under the Navy. When these airports are under the control of the Navy, they have the full say. Even the National Airports Authority has no right to collect revenue. As a result, these Authorities become very poor and they cannot manage their own day-to-day affairs. Madam, defence airports also have to follow certain international norms in this country. But, we see that most of these airports are used by international flights. For example in the airport of Goa, we have many international flights because we have a dozen of chartered flights coming from all over the world, Goa being an international tourist destination. What we see is that the defence authority is an authority unto itself and very often, they violate the international civil aviation norms. I am referring to the two roads across the runways which are used by the naval authority, This is not permitted as per the civil aviation norms. The hon. Minister was kind enough to mention the other day in relation to my question that a new gate which

which is proposed to be constructed at the Dabolim Airport in Goa would check the runway crossings. I do not know why we should not go in for tunnels. In foreign countries we can see tunnels and roads running beneath the runways. Here, we are only talking about the question of security. I do not know why India should suffer from the phobia of security. In Amsterdam you have airport under the runway; you go to Heathrow you have an airport under the runway; you go to Bangkok; yoff go to japan; you go to any country. So, I do not know why we should not spend a little more money and have proper safety precautions, where the roads are not permitted to cross the runways. I hope the hon. Minister will co-ordinate with the defence Ministry and remove these anomalies in our airports. Madam, we have the most beautiful airports. But, there is no sincerity and honesty on the part of the people who run these airports. To give an example, the airports are not properly maintained. In my State, we know we have shortage of water at the airport. This is shortage of water because the potable water supplied by the Government is diverted to the construction works at the airport and they open fire hydrants to meet the amenities at the of toilets at the airport. The main-airport. So, measures should be taken to see to it that the contractor gets his own water, say, in tankers, rather than use the potable water. The second thing is the maintenance tenance work is rented out by the National Airports Authority to a contractor for Rs. 18,000. It is mentioned in the contract that this contractor should use detergents, soaps, camphor balls, phenol or whatever is required in the maintenance of such places. But, in connivance with the Airports Authority, no proper maintenance is done at the airport; no soaps are used nor is phenol nor are camphor balls used in the urinals. I am told that out of Rs. 18,000, this person can save about Rs. 10,000 on these small accessories. Moreover, there is no check because the Airports Authodity people are sitting at far off places like Bombay or Delhi. I had suggested to the hon. Minister that he should have an advisory committee, or rather an inspection committee should be appointed and the prominent people of that area, should go and inspect these facilities and advise the Minister or the Government on that. Now, they feel that they are out of any control from Delhi or Bombay. Madam, whenever Members of Parliament make some suggestions either in Parliament or in the Consultative Committee, it is taken as a political interference.... (*Interruptions*) Mr. Minister, I was mentioning that the toilets at the airports are much worse than those at the railway stations. The police and the security people do not use the common toilet facility but they come to the reserve lounge which is used by VIPs. So that is the state of affairs there. I had given a suggestion last time that an inspection committee should be constituted at each airport. The people who use these airport facilities, namely, the traders, the hoteliers, public men like MPs and MLAs, are ready to work for you free of cost. There should be some checks and balances on such dishonest practices. At least, they will have the fear. When we return from a foreign country to India, it is very shameful to see the trollies that are supplied at the international airports. Most of them don't work. Some trollies will not have wheels. These are worse than our DTC buses. These trollies don't move in one direction. If the Airports Authority cannot effectively manage these minimum facilities, I think some private people can be engaged. Like in foreign countries, it can be managed. Some companies like Sony and others may sponsor provision of these facilities. I suggest this to the hon. Minister and request him to see that these minimum facilities are provided. With these few suggestions, I feel that the hon. Minister has rightly moved this Bill. This is a most progressive Bill.

With this Bill, there will be more safety and security at the airports.

Thank you very much.

SHRI G. SWAMINATHAN (Tamil Nadu): Madam, thank you very much for giving me this opportunity. As a preamble, I would like to inform the Minister that there was a discussion in the morning on a DGCA circular. I think he might have known about it. Because he is here, I think I can take up this matter with him and brief him on the issue. The issue was initiated in the morning by Shrimati Jayanthi Natarajan. Mr. Narayanamy lso spoke on this. I also associated myself with them also. The matter was published in *The Times of India* in today's issue wherein it was mentioned that the DGCA had issued a circular stating that all communications to be sent to the DGCA should be sent in Hindi on Tuesdays. Members have objected to this circular and asked why should be on Tuesdays.

Madam, it is not a question of Tuesday or some other day. The question is why it should be insisted that all communications on Tuesdays should be in Hindi. If we follow this on Tuesday tomorrow the DGCA may say that communications should be in Hindi only on Wednesday, Thursdays, etc. Why do you selected a particular day? Whatever may be the reason, you cannot say that communications have to be made in Hindi only. It has also been said by air taxis the communication should be in Hindi only. It was also mentioned in the morning. English being an associate laguage, this type of a thing cannot be done. This is the matter that was raised in the morning today. It was said that it was not an authentic one. The hon. Deputy Chairman said that it might not be authentic. Shri Jagesh Desai also said that this was not authentic information and so he asked how we could say that this was true and quarrel in the House. He also said that I could not talk about a circular which I did not know to be correct. The only point that I can make is that this has been published in a newspaper. Mr. Jogi and Mr. Ahluwalia said that they had the matter verified and found that the circular was not true. If the circular was not issued, we are very happy that such a circular was not issued. When such a circular was not issued and a news paper published the matter, I think the Minister should take up this matter appropirately and he should find out from the newspaper and ensure that such false information is not published in the newspapers.

In the morning, in addition to this point, I also raised an isue regarding announcements made at the airports and during the flights. Announcements at the airports and abroad the aircraft are made in Hindi and English. I want to say this because we are talking about the Airports Authority of India. I want to know why announcements should be made only in Hindi and English. Announcements can be made in the regional languages also. As a matter of fact, when the aircraft of the Malaysian Airlines or Air Sri Lanka land at Madras, they announce at the airport and aboard the aircraft in the regional language and in English and Hindi. Is is because most of the people who are travelling by those planes are Tamilians going either to Sri Lanka or to Malaysia.

Now-a-days, in Tamil Nadu also, everybody doesn't know Hindi. Everybody doesn't know English too. Many busiessmen who have come up in the recent years have a lot of money but they do not know either of these two languages. And, the people who know both these languages well, do not have the money to travel. That also is a problem. Education and wealth do not go together. In Tamil Nadu we say that Saraswati and Lakshmi do not live together. But in Bombay they always worship goddess Mahalakshmi—there is a beautiful Mahalakshmi Temple there — and so they get a lot of

wealth. I think this is why, as I told this House the other day, on the Napean Sea Road a flat was being sold for Rs. 320 lakhs! We can't even think of three and a half lakh rupees. Now, how do these people afford it? Somebody told me that it is because they worship Mahalakshmi. In Tamil Nadu we worship Palani Andavar Muruga, who is a pauper and beggar. He went away quarrelling with his father. As a person he does't have anything. He stays there on a hill in Tail Nadu and people worship him That is why people in Tamil Nadu are said to be poor and not wealthy. This is the difference. So, sometimes it so happens that the people who know the languages well do not have the money to travel. That is what I am saying.

So, I would request the hon. Minister to see to it that at least at the Madras Airport the Tamil language should be used. I mentioned in the morning also about the use of Tamil language at the Madaras Airport and in the flights too. But, in addition to that, I would also request that South Indian food should also be provided on the flights.

SHRI JAGESH DESAI (Maharashtra): Sir, we are getting this everytime.

SHRI G. SWAMINATHAN: *Idlis* and Dosas are given in Jagesh Desai's area and it is not served in the southern sector. Perhaps he may be eating it in the Bombay sector.

Sir, I have been travelling from Madras many times, but I have never been served either *Idlis* or *Dasa*. This is an attitude of partiality on the part of the hon. Minister. The South Indian food is served only in Maharashtra and Gujarat! ...(Interruptions).

Sir, I have to travel and find out... (*Interruptions*)... Shri V. Narayasamy will vouch for me. Today morning only he said 'my State' about Tamil Nadu. He comes from Pondicherry. But now he is mentioning Tamil Nadu also as his State. It is better if he confines nimself to one State because Seshan is there and he doesn't like people shifting States.

So, I would request the hon. Minister that food should also be served according to the number of regional people travelling in a flight. We are fed up with taking this Pulao and Kurma all the time while travelling from Madras or from Delhi.

So, these are all the points that I wanted to make. Since the hon. Minister is sitting here, I thought I will put forward all those points because some of the point he might not have heard in the morning.

Madam, there is another point and that is that they are trying to merge both the International Airport Authority of India and the National Airport Authority. The reasons for doing this is attainment of better efficiency. My feeling is that the reason is better economic control also. Maybe the underlying reason for this merger has been this very fact. It has also been said that the International Airport Authority of India is making profits. This is wellknown. Perhaps, they have been making a profit of some crores.

Then, the National Airport Authority has also been making profits for the last two years.

SHRI JAGESH DESAI: Since when are they making profits?

SHRI G. SWAMINATHAN: For the last two years, they have made a profit. So, they want these two Authorities to be merged because both of them are profit-making. But, the profit that the National Airport Authority is making is not even 1/4th or 1/5th of the profit that the International Airport Authority is making. That is why all these disputes are being created by those people. Those people are very rich people even

though they only have five airports, they are making a lot of money National Airport Authority has to man 85 airports. Some of the airoprts are not very eocnomical. When witnesses came, Memoranda came, it was disputed by the International Airports Authority and that they do not want to merge their airports and that the advantages they got otherwise would be lost. That was the argument that was given. But, the point is that I fully concur and support the action taken by the hon. Minister in merging both these authorities and calling it as the Airports Authority of India. I accept it. But the only point I want to make is that that authority is making a profit, this authority is not profitable, mayte, this National Airport authority may not continue to make a profit. By merely merging it, the accountability of the National Airports Authority should not be lost, because you are suddenly giving them money that so far belonged to the International Airports Authority and ultimately if you start merging it, either the accountability or the cost-consciousness of his authority should not be lost. That is what I want to state.

And then, like companies, when you have division, perhaps I don't know how you are going to maintain the accounts of these two authorities but, when you decide on their accounts I would also request you to see to it that the divisional accounts are properly maintained If you merge both, we may not know which is profitable, which is not. In Thanjavur there is no airport. Tomorrow, I will come and say as a Member of Parliament, why not start an airport, a very good airport, at Thanjavur? Or, I will come and ask, why can't you upgrade my Trichy airport where I have been frequently going? It hapened in the case of Vayudoot where everybody with some authority or some importance wanted Vayudoot to fly to his place mostly because he wanted to go there. Aand there was a Vayudoot Airport started. I was claiming for a Vaydoot for myself Later on when Vaydoot went from Madras to Thanjavur, what actually happened was there were only three of us travelling most of the time, I would go because I need not pay for the Vayudoot; and Moopnarji used to travel because he can pay himself whether he was going on party account or personal account, don't know. He need not go on party account as he himself is very wealthy. There was another gentleman at Thanjavur. Only the three of us were going and coming. But we had been clamouring for renovation of an airport at Thanjavur which was already there. We would have liked it to continue. But the point is when you go on accepting this kind of propositions from people who want airports, then ultimately, the National Airports Authority, if it is unified, will lose much of its money. So, I would request the hon. Minister to see that divisional accounts are maintained so that some accountability, some cost saving will be there and people will not unecessarily pressurise the Government to start airports, upgrade airports and all that.

Sir, another point which I would like to bring to your notice is the long delay in bringing forth this very important Airports Authority of India Bill. This should have come here at least about 2-3 years ago. I understand, it was approved by the Cabinet on 29th July, 1992 and later on the process had been so tedious and it has been waiting all through. It went to the Standing Committee for a report and then it went for a memorandum and all that. Ultimately, it has taken 2—3 years. Important Bills like this affecting tourism, affecting revenue should not be delayed. The number of people who have started travelling has also gone into millions. So, I only say that the Bill need not have been made to so long.

Sir, another important thing that I would like to say is that the expenditure that you are envisaging for the Airports authority is so enormous. In the 8th Plan Period, you are thinking of spending about Rs. 1,556 crores and in the 9th Plan are you thinking of spending Rs. 3010 crores. My point is from where you are going to get all the money to improve all these airports in the 8th and 9th Plan periods. Money is not easily forthcoming. Even otherwise, money is very difficult to get; especially with our Finance Minister Manmohanji being there, he is very tightfisted, we all know—he will not very easily give this kind of money to you. So, I say that public funding is very, very important for upgrading these airports. We cannot depend only upon the Government and then Five Year Plan amounts.

Unless they are very productive and very profitable, we may not be able to go through the whole process because ultimately, it may become very difficult. I, therefore, request the hon Minister to examine the possibility of getting public funding for these airports. It is not a stray suggestion. In Cochin and Calicut, people have already come forward. There the people have collected money and they are willing with the NRI funds, to upgrade the airports. This kind of experiment can also be tried in areas where NRIs and others are willing to subscribe. Another thing also I wish to say. Why cannot this Airports Authority also become a public limited company with about 51 per cent shares in the hands of the Government so that shares can also be sold outside without losing control of the whole structure? That is one suggestion I w ant to make. Tomorrow, if you say that you do not want even this 49 per cent shares from outside then there is another provision under the latest Companies Act which is going to come under which people can invest in shares without voting rights. You may feel that you need the whole Airports Authority funds in your hands and you do not want to give voting shares to considers. I would also request you to examine whether you can think of public shares without voting rights because most of the people on public companies are still interested in preferential shares. Somebody may be very happy to have shares without voting rights also. For those people, voting is not very important. They say, 'we need a good investment". If that is going to be a good investment, then, you can get a good amount of interest. I feel that the public will come forward to a very large extent, especially the people who are going by flights, in planes, because you can select the people. You know the people who are frequenting flights. It is only company officials who are going and you can approach since your people are also going. Most probably, you may get a lot of funds in this manner. You can think of NRIs help in upgrading Airports. You can also think of getting public funds for this. One more thing is regarding the facilities in the Airports. We are very very unhappy regarding the facilities in the Airports, especially the Internaitonal Airport like the Madras International Airport. You go there. One thing that anybody will understand immediately is that no phone call will be replied to properly. I have to go today, about that I have told Madam that I want to go. If I phone up, no phone will be responded to properly. Now you see, Phone Nos. 142 and 143 are invariably not answered. Sometimes, 143 is working. In Delhi there are 142-143 and 140. I will come to 140 later. In these 142 and 143, most probably one phone is working. In Madras and also at other places, you cannot reach the Airport. You will not know till the last minute whether the flight is on time or whether the flight is late. I ask the Minister one thing. Suppose you go one day, you phone up yourself Do not ask your

PA to phone up. You do not understand the difficulty. If you phone up, ... (*Interruptions*) ...

SHRI S. S. AHLUWALIA (Bihar): Indian Airlines people may know who is going.. (*Interruptions*)...

SHRI G. SWAMINATHAN: In those days, you know Tamilian Kings used to go to unknown places and but ... (*Interruptions*)...

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRIMATI SAROJ KHAPARDE): Swaminathanji you have to catch the flight. Please try to be brief.

SHRI G. SWAMINATHAN: Very difficult, Madam. I do not know if my flight is late. But the problem is that I cannot verify. I request the Minister to see to it that atleast the phone system is all right. There is 140. It is manual exchange. In the manual exchange you will never get. Whenever you go, you find out one number which you can phone up and get the numbers. Then the facilities are very poor. Toilets are very poor, cleaning is so bad and these things you have to see because you are going to get a lot of foreigners from abroad and especially the Japanese people, as I have seen, are very sensitive people. You can understand the Americans, you can understand any kind of people not Japanese. They have become so wealthy that they want everything to be in perfaction. They want to compare India with Japan, that is another difficulty that we are going to face after liberalisation. I would request the Minister to see to it that this report is being done in a proper way. Madam, I do not have time. In telegraphic English, all these matters I want to tell him. I want to mention one more matter regarding domestic airports. It has monopoly shops. In Delhi you have got all the monopoly shops. You cannot purchase even a chocolgate from these monopoly shops. For the chocolates which we used to get for five rupees or six rupees, they now charge fifteen or sixteen rupees. When I wanted to purchase a chocolate for my grand-daughter, they charged sixteen rupees. I always go without purchasing at the airports. You should have some sort of arrangement and see that there is competition among the shops at the airports. I hope that you will be able to do that.

The second thing is regarding safety. Our flights have to be very vigilantly safeguarded There should be safety not only at the airports but there should be safety outside the airports. You have got a lot of brokers outside the airports in Delhi, Madras, Bombay etc. where we find that whenever some foreigners come, they run to them like flifles and try to wean them away. We find unauthorised taxis and unauthorised cars. These people have sometimes been committing thefts a d sometimes people are also killed. You may say that it has nothing to do with the airports. The credibility of the airports depends on the fact that the passengers have to reach their destination safely. Previously there used to be some airport buses. Now they have been discontinued. Many may not mind if these Airport people sometimes charge a foreigner five hundred rupees more. You can charge but then you can provide aim transport. Since the Finance Minister has allowed 5 kilos of gold, people are bringing in gold. When they go to the customs, they are followed. In Bombay somebody was followed and then that man was killed. I wish to suggest to the Ho'ble Finance Minister, you get his gold in Airport customs and gave him a receipt and later on he can get the gold in India from the State Bank of India. Why should he carry gold outside Airport?

I would wind up by congratulating the Hon'ble Minister for the effective way he has bean managing the affairs

of national airports and also the airlines. I also wish him success in spite of inadequacies and difficulties. People in his Ministry are also happy because he is maintaining a harmonious relationship with them. Passengers are also happy. I would now only request him that his Chairman of Airport Authority of India should be there for a longer time. He should keep the Chairman for at least five years so that accountability is there. I wish that the term of the Chairman should be for five years. I also wish the Minister to continue in this Ministry for a langer time.

SHRI B. K. HARIPRASAD (Karnataka): Madam, whenever there are shortcomings in any of the Ministry, it is said that a Bill is being brought either to reform or to make some changes. A Bill alone will not solve the problem. As the Minister was saying in his speech, a Bill is being brought here to improve the quality of service. Well, Madam, as I said, a Bill will not alone solve the problem. The basic need is transformation of the attitude of the Indian Airlines staff especially at the service counters, either at the ground level or in the flight. Though the private operators have come in, still the *sarkari* mentality of the staff has not changed. Well, the MPs or the MLAs or the politicians get due respect. There is no doubt. But the common customer is yet to feel that he is served all right. But, in the case of private operators, the politicians do not get any respect whereas the common public has got some respect shown by the private operators.

Madam, I would like to compliment the hon. Minister who has recently come to Bangalore to lay the foundation stone for the expansion of the Bangalore airport. The Bangalore airport is not of the National Airports Authoity of India, it is of the Defence. Bangalore, in spite of its being one of the fastest growing cities in South-East Asia, with a population of more than 50 lakhs, does not have its own airport. It is an insult to the people of Karnataka, it is an insult to the Kannadigas that they do not have their own airport to feel proud of. The Minister is very popular in Bangalore and Karnataka. The people of Karnataka feel that the Minister had a turning point in his political career from Bangalore. They expect some thing more from him for Bangalore and Karnataka. Bangalore is known for it's beauty, for its climate, for its greenery. It is very well known as an air-conditioned city as a garden city. Yet, the city has no airport of its own. So, I really compliment the Minister for laying the foundation-stone for the expansion of the airport. But mere expansion will not do. Something more has to be done for an airport at Bangalore city. The present airport which is existing in Bangalore is an eyesore to the goodwill and the credibility of the city. It is one of the ugliest spots in the city. During the monsoon, we can have a nice shower in the airport. During the summer, it is horrible to stay. If you say that it is one of the best models of the National Airports Authority of India, then you can imagine how well the airports are maintained. We have the worst possible toilets there. I will start with the toilets because Mr. John Fernandes was saying that the Railway toilets are better. Maybe, it is because the Railway Minister is from Bangalore. And we have one of the best toilets in our railway station It is the worst in the airport, rather I may say that it is without maintence. Madam, as I said, one may call it a model airport. Recently, on one fine day, the passengers were shocked to see that the runway lights were off. There was panic in the airport and among the passengers. Hardly the conveyor belts moved round for the luggage. And this is the situation in the existing airport. Something drastic has to be done to improve the services in the Bangalore airport which is the second largest in generation of revenue, after Bombay, and the third largest, if I am correct, in generation of air traffic.

Madam, recently we have read that a number of private air taxis have started operations. Many of the air taxis operate between trunk lines because they are profit-earning. A majority of them, except one airline, are running full. But still the facilities for the passengers have not improved. Apart from the expansion as I said, the existing airports will not solve the problems or yield the desired results in terms of the standards expected of an international terminal. The present airport is owned by the HAL and is unable to cope up with the increasing demand for operational flights. It would, therefore, be prudent to go in for a totally new facility, developed away from the city area and provide this facility with roads and access to all places so as to ensure a free flow of traffic. Only a totally new facility can free the airport from the restrictions imposed by the Defence people as in the case of the present facility.

Another problem which is hindering the development of Karnataka, especially in relation to airport facilities in Karnataka is that many places, apart from Bangalore, like Mangalore, Hubli Mysore, Belgaum, Kolar, etc. are still to have airports. It is very important in Mangalore and Hubli where huge projects worth about Rs. 3,000 crores are coming up. But still we don't have proper airports. In regard to Mangalore, the airport is on an elevated place, on a hillock. Sometimes, flights had a narrow escape from disaster. I would, therefore, request the hon. Minister to give us an alternative airport near Mangalore. The airports at Belgaum and Hubli need upgradation because these are famous tourist spots and also business centres. They are very beautiful and are better places than Bangalore. They should be given due priority in the next Plan. The immediate need of these airports is the expansion of the air strips at these airports. I think the Minister will give importance to this matter. Another factor that calls for immediate attention is that Karnataka has many air strips other than these three air strips with necessary infrastructural facilities which are not put to use. Many of these places are historically important places, like Mysore and Bellary. If the Civil Aviation Ministry takes up re-construction and upgradation of these air strips, it will give a boost to tourism promotion and tourism development.

Another important point which I forgot to mention is that Bangalore is one of the transit points for many of the southern States. The least expected upgradation facility is the expansion of the lounge and retiring rooms. In the Bangalore airport, a major airport in India, we don't have proper retiring rooms. I request the hon. Minister to consider this matter and take up construction of some retiring rooms at the Bangalore airport.

With these few suggestions, I support this Bill. I am sure this Bill will bring about drastic changes in the airport services.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (MISS SAROJ KHAPARDE): I would now like to know the sense of the House because there is a demand from some of the hon. Members that we should continue the discussion on Tuesday. I would like to know the sense of House because many Members would like to participate in the debate on this Bill.

SHRI JAGESH DESAI: It is good that you have decided to continue the discussion on Tuesday.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (MISS SAROJ KHAPARDE): There are six speakers and many more would like to speak on this.

SYED SIBTEY RAZI (Uttar Pradesh): Madam, we will sit up to 6.00 p.m. and [illegible] that we will adjourn.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (MISS SAROJ KHAPARDE): All right. The discussion on this will continue on Tuesday. Now the House stands adjourned till 11.00 a.m. tomorrow.

The House then adjourn at forty minutes past five of the clock till eleven of the clock on Friday, the 12th August, 1994.